

NGOs: The Preferred Vehicle of Self-styled Demigods

POL S 403 A NGO Politics

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Introduction

Over the past four decades, the “third sector” in America has evolved into a nonprofit industrial complex. (NPIC) This \$1.73 trillion globalized industry is the fifth largest economy in the world and funds over 1.5 million organizations. (McKeever, 2015) The enormous diversity of institutions that comprise it and the Orwellian labels they operate under can make the nonprofit complex difficult to conceptualize. Perhaps a more accurate label for these organization would be “tax exempt”, as they are anything but not-for-profit. While researching this paper, I found that the hegemonic power of oligarchs, foundations, and NGOs at the top is distinct from the charitable organizations below. This symptomatic hierarchy reflects the predatory socio-economic philosophy from which it was forged...neoliberalism. Developed by Milton Friedman in the seventies and implemented by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in the eighties, this utopian ideology makes no distinction between the right or left. It is a doctrine rooted in the illogical notion that the market and monetization are indicators of social needs, and it has been both economically and politically devastating to American society. Neoliberal policies crushed labor unions, deregulated the financial sector, brought massive tax cuts for the rich, and privatized public provisions. As the State withdrew from public services, they looked to tax exempt organizations to fill the gaps. This is primarily what prompted the rapid “NGO-ization” of civil society.

Ninety percent of the NGOs currently in operation were launched after 1975. (Sriskandarajah, 2014) The astounding increase in State funding to the nonprofit industrial complex illustrates the rapid rise of NGOs. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), U.S. development assistance fluctuated from over \$3 billion in 1970 to more than \$7 billion in 1980, \$11 billion in 1990, \$9 billion in 2000, and \$30 billion in 2013, as net disbursements in current U.S. dollars. (OECD, 2015) Similarly, USAID data shows that between 2001 and 2012, total U.S. disbursements for U.S., non-U.S., and international NGOs increased by over 130 percent. (USAID, 2015) The nonprofit industrial complex that emerged, quickly became entrenched all over the world and was suddenly considered to be superior to the public sector in terms of their ability to provide more cost-effective and better targeted services, as opposed to the corrupted and inefficient state bureaucracy.

Philanthropic foundations have also had an important role in the development of the NPIC. They constitute the hegemonic power at the top of the third sector hierarchy. The tax-exempt foundations of billionaire capitalists such as Ford, Rockefeller, Gates, and Buffet, provide grants to nonprofits who promote their values, and claim to address the devastating societal problems that are ironically caused by the neoliberal doctrine that makes them wealthy. While the original purpose of NGOs was to work for the common good, they are also used as instruments of political influence, subversion, and destabilization. Oftentimes those who control the assets used to fund them work closely with government and political actors. (Roy, 2014) Naturally, accountability and transparency are well documented problem within the NGO sector, partially due to a lack of independent and critical analysis by the media, academics, and diplomats. These organizations are shielded by what psychologist Edward Thorndike described as the ‘halo effect’. Tax-exempt organizations routinely get away with making baseless claims to push their highly biased agenda because the values they claim to promote such as peace, human rights,

environmentalism, and social justice, are seen as universally good. They are therefore automatically perceived as credible and constructive forces, immune from investigation and criticism. (NGO Monitor, 2017) This paper offers critical analysis of one of the wealthiest foundations in the world, its founder, and their massive network of NGOs. The purpose is to provide easily available evidence that should lead any individual to question why the media, academia, and government leaders refuse to hold them accountable.

Philosophy of George Soros

The Open Society Foundations (OSF) was founded in 1993 by the multibillionaire hedge-fund manager George Soros. After a recent transfer of \$18 billion made by Soros into the NGO, it became the second biggest philanthropic organization by assets in the United States behind the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (Chung, 2017) OSF spans over 100 countries, has 26 national and regional foundations and offices, and boasts annual expenditures of over \$940 million. (Open Society, 2017) Founder George Soros was born in Budapest, Hungary in 1930 to a non-observant Jewish family. Born with the original surname of Schwartz, his father changed the family's name to Soros to better assimilate into the Gentile population as the Nazis spread into Hungary. In 1947 the family relocated to England, where George attended the London School of Economics. There he was inspired by Socialist professor and philosopher Karl Popper, whom he states was his greatest inspiration besides his father. (Soros, 2006) Soros named his society after Popper's book *The Open Society and its Enemies*. In his 2006 book *The Age of Fallibility*, Soros wrote, "I have set up a network of foundations to promote the principles of open society, but our advocacy often runs up against the dictates of 'realpolitik.'" (*Ibid.*) In Popper's view, the open society was a place that permitted its citizens the right to criticize and change its institutions as they saw fit; he rejected the imposed intellectual conformity, central planning, and historical determinism of Marxist doctrine. (Barker, 2008) Popper felt that a "closed" and thus undesirable society was one that placed self-interest above concern for other nations and cultures. Any belief system or individual claiming to be in possession of "ultimate truth" was an "enemy" of the open society as well. (Horowitz, 2006)

In 1956 Soros moved to New York and worked as a portfolio manager at an investment bank, where his career took off. In 1967, he began managing hedge funds; the financial instrument with which he is most closely associated. Soros is also well known for currency speculation after he did a short on the British Pound by dumping £10 billion worth of the currency on the UK stock market. (Beattie, 2017) Perhaps equally significant as his fortune is his grandiose sense of self. George Soros views himself as a missionary with something of a divine mandate to transform the world and its institutions into something better—as he sees it. In his 1987 book *The Alchemy of Finance*, he wrote: "I admit that I have always harbored an exaggerated view of self-importance—to put it bluntly, I fancied myself as some kind of god or an economic reformer like Keynes or, even better, a scientist like Einstein." (Soros, 2003) In a June 1993 interview with *The Independent*, Soros said he saw himself as "some kind of god, the creator of everything." (Counsell, 1993) And in 2005, he told his biographer Michael Kaufman that his "goal" was nothing less ambitious than "to become the conscience of the world" by using his charitable foundations to bankroll organizations and causes that he deems worthwhile. (Inskeep, 2005) Soros is often quite candid when speaking about his true nature. "I am sort of a deus ex

machina,” or ‘god from the machine’, he once told the New York Times in 1994. “I am something unnatural. I’m very comfortable with my public persona because it is one I have created for myself. It represents what I like to be as distinct from what I really am. You know, in my personal capacity I’m not actually a selfless philanthropic person. I’m very much self-centered.” (Ehrenfeld & Macomber, 2004)

The man behind OSF has written many books and said many things. After reading his words, it is quite clear that he is a vain yet complex and highly intelligent, self-styled “god”. There is also a sense that he is deeply anti-American. In his 2006 book *The Age of Fallibility* he writes, “Changing the attitude and policies of the United States remains my top priority” and “The main obstacle to a stable and just world order is the United States. This is a harsh — indeed, for me, painful — thing to say, but unfortunately I am convinced it is true.” (Soros, 2006) The apparent lack of concern among citizens to such brazen remarks is quite perplexing. Especially coming from a man who seems perfectly comfortable operating outside the rule of law to deconstruct our political system, economy, and society. To this he writes in his 1995 book, “I do not accept the rules imposed by others. If I did, I would not be alive today. I am a law-abiding citizen, but I recognize that there are regimes that need to be opposed rather than accepted. And in periods of regime change, the normal rules don't apply.” (Soros, Wien & Koenen, 1995). George Soros’s motto, “If I spend enough, I will make it right,” is the essence of his articulated ideas about changing society. Perhaps the American public is simply unaware of the philosophy behind the most influential foundation in the world. Or maybe Soros and his network really do have enough money to allow him to play God.

OSF Domestic Funding

Over the past 35 years, the Open Society Foundations have had expenditures of close to \$14 billion. The total Open Society Foundations budget for 2017 is \$940.7 million and is organized under 7 regions and 10 themes. (Open Society Foundations: About Us, 2017)

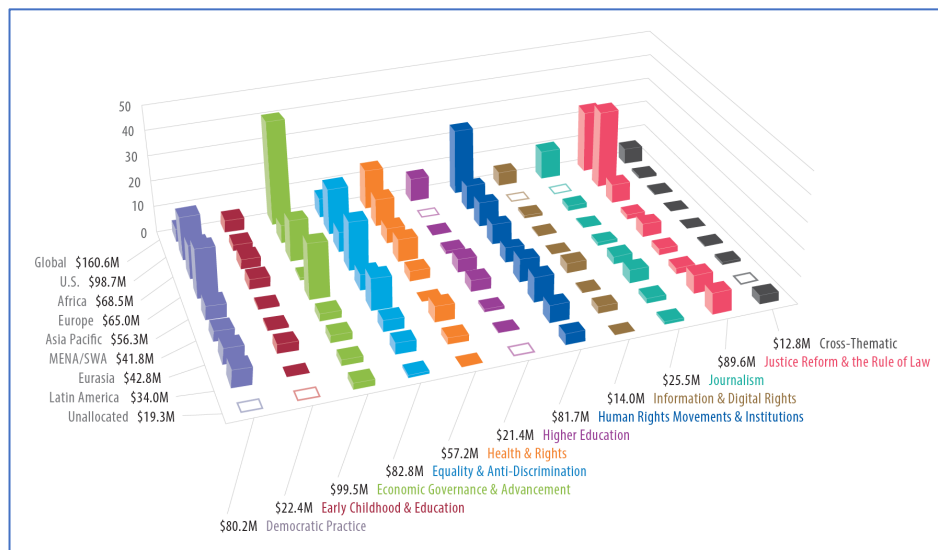


FIGURE 1: 2017 BUDGET BY REGION & PROGRAMMATIC THEME
(<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/expenditures>)

In the U.S., Soros uses his money to elect Democrat candidates and to guide the party into alignment with his far-left ideas of how our country should function. While his charitable giving goes to liberal organizations with close ties to the Democratic Party, his political giving goes almost entirely to Democrats. In 1995, George Soros appeared on PBS with Charlie Rose, and said:

I like to influence policy. I was not able to get to George Bush (Senior). But now I think I have succeeded with my influence...I do now have great access in the (Clinton) administration. There is no question about this. We actually work together as a team. (PBS Interview, 1995)

Soros spent over \$18 million on political campaigns affiliated with the Democratic Party in 2016, \$24 million on left-of-center Super PACs over the last few years—including \$7 million on Hillary Clinton’s primary PAC, Priorities USA—and partnered with other donors in a \$15 million campaign to mobilize specific demographics. (George Soros – Political Activities, 2017) During the G.W. Bush presidency, Soros made it his first priority to rid America of what he believes to be the fascist tyranny of Conservatives. At the 2007 Davos conference, Soros stated “America needs to follow the policies it has introduced in Germany. We have to go through a certain de-Nazification process.” (Peretz, 2007)

Open Society Foundations mission statement claims that they work to build “vibrant and tolerant societies whose governments are accountable and open to the participation of all people.” Additionally, OSF seeks to “strengthen the rule of law; respect for human rights, minorities, and a diversity of opinions; democratically elected governments; and a civil society that helps keep government power in check.” (OSF, 2017) One logical way to verify the credibility of the foundation is to determine whether they are funding organizations whose actions are congruent with the values claimed in their mission and whether those values are representative of the society in which they represent. Unfortunately, following OSF money through its massive network is a daunting process because they do not provide names of NGO grantees nor amounts transferred to individual groups. In 2016 the OSF-funded organization Transparify found that Open Society Foundations was the least transparent non-profit among those in the United States which it reviewed. Open Society Foundations earned a global transparency rating of zero stars for non-transparency of the organization’s funding. They were the only group in the United States Transparify reviewed in 2016 to receive such a low grade. (Datoc, 2016) However, thanks to documents and emails released by WikiLeaks and over 2,500 documents hacked by DC Leaks in 2016, we are given a very informative glimpse into this secretive network’s operation.

A leaked 2014 Open Society Foundations U.S. Programs budget review indicated that the \$125 million budget breaks down into five categories: (Open Society U.S., 2013)

- \$50.7 million (25% of U.S. Programs budget) for Core/New initiatives that included support for grantees, “social justice laboratories, a \$25 million reserve fund, and “long-term idea generation” initiatives.
- \$14.9 million (14.94%) for “Democracy” related initiatives

- \$20.28 million (20.28%) for “Justice” related initiatives focused mainly on reducing incarceration, challenging punishments, police accountability in New York, and liberalizing drug laws.
- \$22.95 million (22.65%) for “Equality” related initiatives namely focused on immigration reform, school discipline, “fiscal equity,” and minority programs.
- \$16.13 million (16.1%) for operations, admin, and program development.

Another leaked document from a 2014 board meeting reveals how extensive the web of grantee organizations is. In just five years, nearly \$900 million dollars was given to over 2,000 NGOs. (Open Society U.S., 2014, p 201) And those are just the ones in the U.S. What we learn from the leaks and by the actions of several of these well-funded NGOs carrying out George Soros’s agenda, is that they are vehicles of infiltration and subversion used to covertly influence, control and dominate nations.

Building a tolerant society for the common good?

Over the past several years, incidents of racial and civil unrest in America have reached a level not seen since the 1960s and 70s. Prior to the politically fueled Trayvon Martin incident in 2012, 79 percent of whites and 63 percent of blacks held a favorable view of American race relations. (NBC News, 2013) Today, anti-police riots have morphed into anti-Trump riots in cities across the country, with many of the same organizations and individuals serving as instigators: Black Lives Matter, MoveOn.org, International Action Center, ANSWER Coalition, the racist group UnidosUS (formerly the National Council of La Raza), the communist-connected group Color of Change, and the agitation group Center for Media and Democracy. These and many other far-left, fake “grassroots” groups were all funded by Open Society Foundation grants. (OSF, 2014) Following the Trayvon Martin shooting, Black Lives Matter (BLM) grew from a hashtag slogan into a nationwide, riot-inciting operation, thanks to funding from Soros and a complicit mainstream media. The outrage and destruction after the false narrative surrounding the 2014 death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri was orchestrated and managed by NGOs funded by George Soros. The Washington Times reported that according to tax filings, OSF had contributed at least \$33 million in one year to support Ferguson activists. (Riddell, 2015) A DC Leaks document from October 2015 revealed that immediately after the death of Freddie Gray in Baltimore, OSF approved a \$650,000 “investment” for BLM funding, viewing his death as a “unique opportunity” to create “accountability” for the Baltimore police while aiding activists in “reforming” the city. The document goes on to justify the investment by citing the NGO’s prior investments in movements, citing:

Our support of the #BlackLivesMatter movement follows other investments that have taken very different paths, including the Dreamers and Occupy Wall Street. USP grantee United We Dream (UWD) for example, a youth-led organization formed in 2009 by undocumented students and other advocates, changed the narrative about undocumented people and continues to be a major player in the immigration reform field. (Open Society U.S, 2015)

The investment in chaos was seemingly well worth it. Four months later, a leaked document from the February 2016 board meeting affirmed BLM also worked to influence candidate platforms during the 2016 primary season. It also reveals the sad reality of why an elite class of billionaires promote divisive and harmful identity politics. Because convincing blacks of the big lie that white America is racist meets the emotional needs of the most important voting bloc in the Democrat base. (The Rising American Electorate, 2017)

“Leaders of #BlackLivesMatter and The Movement for Black Lives worked to influence candidate platforms during the 2016 primary season. This came alongside the recent acknowledgement by political strategists that African-American voters may be much more pivotal to the 2016 general election than previously forecasted.” (Open Society U.S, 2016)

In addition to masterminding a false racial narrative, (Ibid., p 67) the Soros network has generously funded many “open border” and “open voting” groups, such as the American Council of La Raza, America Votes, ACLU, America’s Voice, American Bridge 21st Century, and Project Vote. (OSF U.S. Programs Grants, 2017) OSF money has repeatedly been used to manipulate election laws and process rules across the country. In 2015 Soros gave \$5 million to the trust that sued to rid swing states of voter ID laws, ostensibly to protect minority voting rights. (Haberman, 2015) He was successful in federal appeals court, who issued opinions that could seriously impact future decisions on the issue. No consideration was given to the fact that voter ID laws have consistently polled as favorable to the public with 78 percent of Americans wanting laws requiring proof of citizenship before being eligible to vote. (Rasmussen, 2015) Similarly, Soros holds no regards for American’s overwhelming opposition to the “open border” immigration agenda he is pushing. A recent poll showed 80 percent of voters are against sanctuary cities. (Easley, 2017) A 2015 Chicago Council on Global Affairs poll found that just 36 percent of Americans supported admitting refugees from the Middle East. (Chicago Council, 2016) Negating the will of the American people, documents show that OSF successfully pressed the Obama administration into increasing to 100,000 the total number of refugees taken in by the U.S. annually. The document states “In the face of this pressure, the Obama administration announced Sept. 20 that by 2017, it would raise to 100,000 the total number of refugees the U.S. takes worldwide each year,” (Open Society U.S, 2015, p 28)

OSF International Funding

Around the world, nations are becoming more aware to the threat George Soros and OSF poses. Many have taken appropriate measures to defend their culture, laws, stability, and way of life from his methods of NGO subversion. In Macedonia, a movement called Stop Operation Soros (SOS) has been launched to “fight against one-mindedness in the civil sector, which is devised and led by George Soros”. (Stop Operation Soros, 2017) Hungary has vowed to use “all the tools at its disposal” to “sweep out” NGOs funded by Soros, which “serve global capitalists and back political correctness over national governments” (Simon, 2017) A year after Soros admitted on CNN that OSF was involved in the violent overthrow of Ukraine’s government, (Zakaria, 2014) the NGO was banned in Russia, who in a statement declared “It was found that the activity of the Open Society Foundations and the Open Society Institute Assistance Foundation represents a

threat to the foundations of the constitutional system of the Russian Federation and the security of the state,” (Ablan, 2015) After leaks revealed that Soros is funding an agenda to destroy the Jewish State, Israel backed Hungary and denounced OSF as a threat. (Baker, 2017) India has also acted against OSF, prohibiting Indian donors from sending them money. (Tripathi, 2016) Brexit politician Nigel Farage recently called out Soros at an EU Parliament debate on the Paradise Papers. He stated “George Soros has spent countless billions on 'Open Society Foundations' to undermine national borders and the nation state across the EU. It could be the biggest level of international political collusion in history.” (Soros and his 226, 2017)

Discussion

The above examples are just a few of the countless actions taken by George Soros and Open Society Foundations that have led to chaos and destruction of civil society. His unrestrained financial influence is the constant behind nearly every recent movement that has led to increased violence, hatred and death. The unrest in Ferguson cost Missouri residents, area police departments, and taxpayers more than \$22 million. (McDonald, 2015) Rioting in Baltimore cost citizens at least \$20 million. (Wenger, 2015) In 2015 there was a 61 percent increase in assaults on police officers and in 2016, a 14 percent increase over that. Officers are now being attacked at a rate of more than 150 a day and nearly one assault for every ten police officers in the country. (FBI, 2016) In Europe, countries are dealing with an unprecedented increase of crime, terrorism, and financial devastation caused by open door policies to mass migration. A leaked 2015 German police report showed an 80 percent increase in crime over just 1 year. (Kern, 2016) According to a 2016 draft from the federal finance ministry, Germany expects to spend over \$110 billion by the end of 2020 on costs related to the crisis. (Martin, 2016) Unsurprisingly, Soros and OSF are directly responsible, and just like in the U.S., they are right there to capitalize on the crisis. A leaked 2016 review of Open Society Foundations “International Migration Initiative” makes three key points: OSF has been successful at influencing global immigration policy; Europe’s refugee crisis presents “new opportunities” for the organization to influence global immigration policy, and the refugee crisis is the “new normal.” (Crowley, 2016) In a letter published in the Wall Street Journal entitled, 'Why I’m Investing 500 million USD in Migrants', Soros confirms his involvement and arguably sheds light on a motive. He writes:

...I have decided to earmark \$500 million for investments that specifically address the needs of migrants, refugees and host communities. I will invest in startups, established companies, social-impact initiatives and businesses founded by migrants and refugees themselves. Although my main concern is to help migrants and refugees arriving in Europe, I will be looking for good investment ideas that will benefit migrants all over the world. (Soros, 2016)

This profit-making machine Soros created is evidence as to why the destructive cycle of neoliberalism will only worsen and why the number of NGOs has increased so dramatically. Elite donors use charity to drive neoliberal business ethics and interests. It’s a phenomenon known as philanthrocapitalism and is something that deserves more discussion in regards to how it’s changing the public domain.

Conclusion

This short summary of George Soros, his foundation, and network of NGO influence should make every tax-paying citizen uncomfortable. If social problems can no longer be trusted to be addressed by our democratically elected government and that responsibility is entrusted to philanthrocapitalists, we are no longer a democracy but an oligarchy. There is nothing philanthropic about drowning a democracy in enough money to make people ignore the obvious corruption. Billionaires pouring millions of dollars into national, state and local elections, diminish the integrity of democracy in the United States. Our leaders are no longer elected; they are selected, thus primarily beholden to the power elite. Today, the true rulers of our government and shapers of our society are ultra-rich demigods who are totally unaccountable to the public. Their non-transparent, non-tax-paying foundations are perfect machines for turning a miniscule portion of their wealth into immense power. George Soros and others like him, decide what values a society should have and undermine the true will of its members by creating false perceptions. What the complicit media portrays as revolutionaries are oftentimes nothing more than professionalized, salaried activists working for philanthrocapitalists looking to manage public outrage. The reluctance of journalists and academics to expose this perpetual cycle of corruption, poses a serious threat in the U.S. The anti-NGO actions being taken by other nations should be enough to demand thorough and unbiased investigation into these foundations and their NGO networks. American tax-paying citizens have every right to and should demand complete transparency from these non-tax-paying organizations. NGOs should be judged on their actions, not their rhetoric and the question of what place these self-governing corporations have in a democracy needs to be asked.

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